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UNCLAS CAIRO 002516

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PHUM PGOV KDEM ASEC EG

SUBJECT: EGYPT: "ENOUGH" BACK ON THE STREETS IN CAIRO

REF: A. CAIRO 2433

B. CAIRO 1413

Sensitive but unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

¶1. (SBU) As of 1630 local time on March 30, 300-400 demonstrators from Kifaya ("Enough"), a loose coalition of opponents of the GOE, were gathered in front of the Press Syndicate building (about one mile from the U.S. Embassy) holding banners rejecting a fifth presidential term for Mubarak, rejecting "inheritance of rule" (a slogan aimed at Presidential son Gamal Mubarak), and demanding a repeal of the emergency law. The protesters met at the Press Syndicate when thousands of riot troops blocked access to the Parliament building. (Comment: Embassy operations were not affected by today's demonstration. End comment.)

¶2. (SBU) Although the demonstration (and especially police efforts to contain it) again caused serious traffic snarls in Central Cairo, major arteries remained open and there have so far been no reports of arrests or violence. However, arrests of demonstrators, and particularly organizers, may be inevitable - especially because the GOE gave notice several days ago that this particular demonstration would not/not be authorized.

¶3. (SBU) This demonstration is the latest of a series of small but well publicized actions by Kifaya. Kifaya is an umbrella group comprising a wide spectrum of regime opponents ranging from communists to Nasserists to Islamists. The group members' only common denominators appear to be opposition to the Mubarak regime and opposition to "U.S.-Zionist imperialism." (See ref B for more information on Kifaya and its activities.)

¶4. (SBU) Security forces' decision not to block the streets today allowed a larger (but still modest) number of demonstrators to congregate than during the Muslim Brotherhood's thwarted March 27 demonstration (ref A). At that time, the massive security operation sealed off most of Central Cairo's principal arteries, essentially paralyzing the city for several hours.

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GRAY